

**AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS**

A complete listing of the claims is as follows:

Claim 1. (*Previously Presented*) A binding to retain a boot on a gliding or rolling apparatus, said binding comprising:

    a base for supporting the boot, said base including an upper surface extending along a plane;

    a first lateral flange, a second lateral flange transversely spaced from said first lateral flange, said first and second lateral flanges extending upwardly relative to said surface of said base;

    at least one linkage connecting said first lateral flange to said second lateral flange, said linkage comprising:

        a first band extending from one fastening end to a free end, a first fastener attaching said fastening end of said first band to said first lateral flange;

        a tightening device attached to said second lateral flange, said tightening device facilitating an adjustment of a length of said linkage by removably retaining a portion of said first band;

        an abutment fixed to said first band, said tightening device being positioned between the abutment and said fastening end of said first band, thereby preventing separation of said first band and said tightening device;

    at least one linkage of said at least one linkage being movable relative to said first and second lateral flanges to a boot removal/insertion position extending along a plane positioned at substantially 0° relative to said plane of the upper surface of said base.

Claim 2. (*Canceled*)

Claim 3. (*Original*) A binding according to claim 1, wherein:

said tightening device has a passage for guiding said first band, said abutment being wider than said passage.

Claim 4. (*Original*) A binding according to claim 1, further comprising:

a rear arch for supporting a rear of the boot, said rear arch connecting said first and second lateral flanges, wherein a length of each of said at least one linkage is constructed and arranged so that, when said each of said at least one linkage is forwardly positioned, each of said at least one linkage extends around a front of the boot when the boot is supported on said base plate and in contact with said rear arch.

Claim 5. (*Original*) A binding according to claim 4, wherein:

said at least one linkage includes a front linkage having a length within a range of about 25 to 50 centimeters.

Claim 6. (*Original*) A binding according to claim 4, wherein:

said at least one linkage includes a rear linkage having a length within a range of about 45 to 85 centimeters.

Claim 7. (*Original*) A binding according to claim 1, further comprising:

a second fastener;

said linkage including a second band, said second fastener attaching said second band to said second lateral flange, said tightening device being fixed to said second band.

Claim 8. (*Original*) A binding according to claim 7, wherein:

said first and second lateral flanges are attached to said base.

Claim 9. (*Original*) A binding according to claim 8, wherein:

said tightening device has a passage for guiding said first band, said abutment being wider than said passage.

Claim 10. (*Original*) A binding according to claim 7, wherein:

said tightening device has a passage for guiding said first band, said abutment being wider than said passage.

Claim 11. (*Original*) A binding according to claim 7, wherein:

said first and second fasteners of each linkage are journals.

Claim 12. (*Original*) A binding according to claim 11, wherein:

one guide guides said abutment along said second band.

Claim 13. (*Original*) A binding according to claim 7, wherein:

one guide guides said abutment along said second band.

Claim 14. (*Currently Amended*) A binding according to claim 7, wherein:

said first and second fasteners constitute first and second journal connections;

said one linkage of said at least one linkage is pivotal about said first and second journal connections to said position substantially 0° relative to said plane of said base.

Claim 15. (*Original*) A binding according to claim 7, wherein:

said first fastener extends from said first band to said first lateral flange and  
said second fastener extends from said second band to said second lateral flange.

Claim 16. (*Original*) A binding according to claim 7, wherein:

said free end of said first band has a longitudinally tapered shape, and said  
abutment comprises a pair of lateral teeth.

Claim 17. (*Canceled*)

Claim 18. (*Previously Presented*) A binding to retain a boot on a gliding or rolling  
apparatus, said binding comprising:

a first lateral flange, a second lateral flange transversely spaced from said  
first lateral flange;

at least one linkage extending from said first flange to said second flange,  
said one linkage comprising:

a first band extending from a fastening end to a free end having  
a longitudinally tapered width, said fastening end of said first band being directly attached  
to said first lateral flange by means of a first fastener, said free end of said first band  
having a longitudinally tapered shape;

a second band having a fastening end directly attached to said  
second lateral flange by means of a second fastener;

a tightening device affixed to said second band and facilitating an  
adjustment of a length of said one linkage by removably retaining a portion of said first  
band against movement relative to said second band;

an abutment on said first band for preventing separation of said first band from said tightening device, said tightening device being positioned between said fastening end of said first band and said abutment;

said abutment comprising a pair of lateral teeth, extending rearwardly from said longitudinally tapered width of said free end of said first band.

Claim 19. (*Previously Presented*) A binding to retain a boot on a gliding or rolling apparatus, said binding comprising:

a base for supporting the boot, said base including a surface extending along a plane;

a first lateral flange, a second lateral flange transversely spaced from said first lateral flange, said first and second lateral flanges extending upwardly relative to said surface of said base;

at least one linkage connecting said first lateral flange to said second lateral flange, said linkage comprising:

a first band extending from a fastening end to a free end, a first fastener attaching said fastening end of said first band to said first lateral flange;

a second band extending from a fastening end to a free end, a second fastener attaching said fastening end of said second band to said second lateral flange;

a tightening device attached to said second band, said tightening device facilitating an adjustment of a length of said linkage by removably retaining a portion of said first band;

a common median plane of the linkage extends from said fastening end of said first band to said fastening end of said second band;

an abutment fixed to said first band proximate said free end of said first band, so as to be located on an opposite side of the tightening device with respect to said fastening end of said first band, thus preventing a separation of said first band and said tightening device;

said linkage being movable relative to said first and second lateral flanges to a boot removal/insertion position, said linkage extending along a plane positioned at substantially 0° relative to said plane of said surface of said base in said boot removal/insertion position.

Claim 20. (*Original*) A binding according to claim 19, wherein:

said first and second bands of said linkage extend longitudinally along a common plane, said plane intersecting said first and second fasteners.

Claim 21. (*Previously Presented*) A binding to retain a boot on a gliding or rolling apparatus, said binding comprising:

a base for supporting the boot, said base including an upper surface extending along a plane;

a first lateral flange, a second lateral flange transversely spaced from said first lateral flange, said first and second lateral flanges extending upwardly relative to said surface of said base;

at least one linkage connecting said first lateral flange to said second lateral flange, said linkage comprising:

a first band extending from one fastening end to a free end, a first fastener attaching said fastening end of said first band to said first lateral flange;

a tightening device attached to said second lateral flange, said

tightening device facilitating an adjustment of a length of said linkage by removably retaining a portion of said first band;

at least one linkage of said at least one linkage being movable relative to said first and second lateral flanges to a boot removal/insertion position extending along a plane positioned at substantially 0° relative to said plane of said base.

Claim 22. (*Currently Amended*) A binding to retain a boot on a gliding or rolling apparatus, said binding comprising:

a base for supporting the boot, said base including an upper surface extending along a plane;

a first lateral flange, a second lateral flange transversely spaced from said first lateral flange, said first and second lateral flanges extending upwardly relative to said surface of said base;

a front linkage and a rear linkage, each of said front and rear linkages extending from said first lateral flange to said second lateral flange;

at least one of said front and rear linkages comprising:

a first band extending from a fastening end to a free end, a first fastener attaching said fastening end of said first band to said first lateral flange;

a second band extending from a fastening end to a free end, a second fastener attaching said fastening end of said second band to said second lateral flange;

a tightening device attached to said second band, said tightening device facilitating an adjustment of a length of said linkage between said first and second lateral flanges by engagement with an abutment of said first band as said first band is superimposed with a portion of said second band;

at least one of said front and rear linkages being movable relative to said first and second lateral flanges forwardly from a boot retention position to a boot removal/insertion position, while said abutment is engaged by said tightening device, said one of said front and rear linkages being unrestrained neither by said base nor by either of said first and second flanges in said boot removal/insertion position.

Claim 23. (*Previously Presented*) A binding according to claim 22, wherein:

said abutment of said first band comprises one of a series of teeth of said first band;

said tightening device comprises a pawl selectively manipulable into and out of abutting engagement with a tooth of said series of teeth of said first band.

Claim 24. (*Previously Presented*) A binding according to claim 22, wherein:

said tightening device comprises a bridge and a pair of laterally opposed upstanding wings attached to said second band, a passage having a width between said wings;

said abutment of said first band comprises an enlargement proximate the free end of said first band, said abutment having a width larger than said width of the passage to prevent withdrawal of said first band from said passage.